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UNCLAS BOGOTA 005218

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR PM/WRA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: LANDMINE CONCERT RAISES AWARENESS AND MONEY

1. (U) On May 23, the Vice President's office of Landmine Coordination (Observatorio de Minas) and the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) co-sponsored a fund-raising concert to benefit the University Hospital Rehabilitation Center in Bucaramanga, Santander Department. The performance was part of the Colombian government's "Arts and Mines" series, which encourages local artists to raise awareness and support for humanitarian landmine action much like the "Night of a Thousand Dinners." Spanish pop star Miguel Bose and the Bogota Philharmonic performed for roughly four hundred people and made headlines in leading daily El Tiempo with landmine statistics for the three days preceding the concert. UNICEF has not yet reported the total raised from the event.

2. (U) Vice President Francisco Santos, who is both personally and professionally engaged on the landmine issue, asked Bose, a family friend, to perform for the fund-raiser. Future Arts and Mines concerts planned with famous Colombian singers such as Shakira, Juanes, and Carlos Vives may raise funds to expand the rehabilitation centers to other large urban areas over the next year.

3. (SBU) Comment: This performance confirmed that the Observatorio can raise funds and media coverage for mine action projects from the local population. However, the event changed venues at the last minute, was understaffed, and demonstrated a level of disorganization already criticized by other donor nations during the April Policy Assessment Visit (PAV). End comment.  
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